DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 478 449 CE 085 160

AUTHOR	Macleod, Deirdre
TITLE	Reviewing LSDA Support for Skills: Part of an LSDA Collection. A Basis for Skills.
INSTITUTION	Learning and Skills Development Agency, London (England).
SPONS AGENCY	Learning and Skills Council, Coventry (England).
ISBN	ISBN-1-85338-877-7
PUB DATE	2003-00-00
NOTE	74p.; For other volumes in the A Basis for Skills pack, see CE 085 156-159. For the full text of the pack (ISBN-1-85338-866-1), including the Introduction: http://www.lsda.org.uk/pubs/dbaseout/download.asp?code=1486_1of6.
AVAILABLE FROM	Learning and Skills Development Agency, Regent Arcade House, 19-25 Argyll Street, London W1F 7LS, United Kingdom (Ref. No. 1486 6of6, free). Tel: 020 7297 9000; Fax: 020 7297 9001; Web site: http://www.lsda.org.uk/home.asp. For full text: http://www.lsda.org.uk/pubs/dbaseout/ download.asp?code=1486_6of6.
PUB TYPE	Information Analyses (070)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Cooperative Planning; Delivery Systems; *Economic Development; *Education Work Relationship; Educational Quality; Employment Qualifications; Foreign Countries; Job Skills; Partnerships in Education; Postsecondary Education; Program Content; *Research Projects; *Research and Development Centers; Role of Education; *School Business Relationship; Strategic Planning; Student Certification; Student Evaluation; Teaching Methods; *Vocational Education

ABSTRACT

The main publications of the United Kingdom's Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) on vocational skills and economic development issues since 1997 were reviewed. The primary purpose of the review was to identify key messages and useful sources of further reading on a range of skills and economic development topics. The materials presented in the review were organized under the following topics: (1) the contribution of further education to economic development; (2) developing the strategic policy framework; (3) meeting employer needs; (4) meeting employee needs; (5) the content of vocational learning programs; (6) assessment and qualifications; (7) teaching and learning issues; (8) delivery of vocational learning; (9) quality improvement; (10) the provider-employer interface in partnerships; and (11) the role of other organizations in partnerships. Each of the aforesaid sections contains the following elements: (1) a brief overview of LSDA's work on the topic, explaining the purpose and types of publications that exist and identifying the key publications; (2) a summary of key messages emerging from LSDA's work; (3) a survey of the issues raised in the work; (4) identification of developmental approaches, strategies, and sources of practical advice by LSDA; and (5) sources of additional related material. (Contains 43 references. An introduction to the series is appended.) (MN)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS
BEEN GRANTED BY

M. J. Nowocin

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

learning
and skills
development
agency

ED 478 449

a basis for skills

reviewing LSDA support for skills

Deirdre Macleod

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

part of an LSDA collection

2

edited by Maria Hughes

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EC 308 160

learning
and skills
development
agency

a basis for skills

reviewing LSDA support for skills

Deirdre Macleod

part of an LSDA collection

edited by Maria Hughes

This publication is part of the LSDA collection *A basis for skills*. Each publication is available separately and the overview is on the LSDA website www.LSDA.org.uk in *Briefing*.

Published by the
Learning and Skills Development Agency

www.LSDA.org.uk

Feedback should be sent to:
Information Services
Learning and Skills Development Agency
Regent Arcade House
19–25 Argyll Street
London W1F 7LS.
Tel 020 7297 9144
Fax 020 7297 9242
enquiries@LSDA.org.uk

Registered with the Charity Commissioners

Printed in the UK

1486 6 of 6/05/03/2700

ISBN 1 85338 877 7 (book)
ISBN 1 85338 866 1 (pack)

© Learning and Skills Development Agency 2003.
All rights reserved

Further information

For further information about the issues discussed in this publication please contact:

Information Services
Learning and Skills Development Agency.
Tel 020 7297 9144
enquiries@LSDA.org.uk

This publication was supported by the Learning and Skills Council as part of a grant to the Learning and Skills Development Agency for a programme of research and development.

Contents

Introduction

Reviewing LSDA support for skills: overall messages

Topics:

A: the contribution of further education to economic development

B: developing the strategic policy framework

C: meeting employer needs

D: meeting employee needs

E: the content of learning programmes

F: assessment and qualifications

G: teaching and learning issues

H: delivery of vocational learning

I: quality improvement

J: partnerships – the provider/employer interface

K: partnerships – the role of other organisations

Documents reviewed

Introduction

This review draws together work published by the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) over the last six years or so on vocational skills and economic development issues. It has been prepared as part of an LSDA collection of papers – *A basis for skills* – and can be read as part of that collection or on its own.

It is useful to draw together LSDA's work on vocational skills and learning for economic development to take stock of what is known and so that existing work can be built upon. The government's skills strategy is due to be published imminently, making this overview of analysis, research and developmental work particularly timely.

Scope of the review

The review covers the main publications by LSDA since 1997 on aspects of vocational skills policy and practice, employer needs and economic development.

Its primary purpose is to identify key messages and useful sources of further reading on a range of skills and economic development topics. A note of caution, however: some of the publications cited contain case studies, contact information or advice on funding sources that may have been superseded or have changed in the case of less recent publications. Where readers follow up references cited in this review and wish to check whether case study or contact information is still current, they should contact Maria Hughes at LSDA for more information on 020 7207 9118 or mhughes@LSDA.org.uk

Background and context

This review considers the work undertaken by LSDA and FEDA, as LSDA was known before 2000. With the name change came an important change in focus. Prior to 2000, FEDA concentrated on examining and helping to develop the work of FE colleges; since then, the focus has extended to all providers in the post-16 sector. This report reflects the broadening of LSDA's frame of reference over time. Note: all references to LSDA's work in this review include work previously undertaken by FEDA.

LSDA, and formerly FEDA, produces a range of outputs:

- good practice guides
- research reports
- information packs
- commentary papers on policy proposals and developments
- advice on policy development and implementation.

Evidence and information from the full range of outputs have been considered here.

What the review offers

The review offers:

- an overview of the main messages arising from LSDA's work on economic and skills development issues, overall and in relation to each topic
- a description of the main findings, evidence and development proposals emerging on each topic, with a list of the main LSDA sources consulted. The types of publication considered under each topic are identified
- a detailed, referenced bibliography for the FEDA/LSDA research examined as part of this review.

Different types of publications have different purposes and intended audiences and so contain different types of information. Some strategic policy-oriented publications have been aimed at national policy-makers, whereas other practice-oriented documents have been aimed at staff and managers in learning providers. On many topics, LSDA has developed policy and practice-oriented proposals. Different types of publications are distinguished within each topic.

Organisation of the review

Material from the source publications has been organised under 11 specific, but overlapping, topics:

- A: the contribution of further education to economic development
- B: developing the strategic policy framework
- C: meeting employer needs
- D: meeting employee needs
- E: the content of vocational learning programmes
- F: assessment and qualifications
- G: teaching and learning issues
- H: delivery of vocational learning
- I: quality improvement
- J: partnerships – the provider/employer interface
- K: partnerships – the role of other organisations.

The review has been organised to help readers identify key areas of interest for further reading. However, the categorisation of the source material is subjective; much of the material fits into more than one category. To help the reader, the last paragraph in each

of the topic overviews indicates where additional, related material may be found on other topics.

Structure of each topic

Each section of the review follows a similar format:

- a brief overview of LSDA's work on the topic, explaining the purpose and types of publications that exist and identifying the key publications
- a summary of key messages emerging from LSDA's work
- a survey of the issues raised in the work
- identification of developmental approaches, strategies and sources of practical advice by LSDA.

LSDA support for skills: overall messages

A: the contribution of further education to economic development

FE colleges make a major contribution on a range of economic development fronts: as stakeholders; as service providers; and as strategic partners. However, colleges are often overlooked in the debate about skills strategies and economic development and there is a belief that colleges could do more, particularly in relation to positioning themselves as leading-edge human resource (HR) developers.

B: developing the strategic policy framework

Developing a skilled and educated workforce able to respond to changing economic demands is the most important factor in securing economic competitiveness, but this priority, and the important role of FE sector could play in meeting it, has been least clearly articulated through specific initiatives aimed at education and training providers.

A strategy for workforce development must start from the perspective of business solutions for employers and access to life chances for employees. It must distinguish between different types of employers and workforces. It must also combine strategies to widen participation and combat social exclusion with strategies to develop skills and high standards of achievement, as these issues are closely connected.

The government's role should be more strategic than tactical. The government should set the framework for others to provide the detail. Policy development and strategies for implementation should be developed simultaneously. There is a limit to the extent to which strategy and practice can be determined through the intervention of government.

C: meeting the needs of employers

The primary focus of any skills or workforce development strategy should be helping businesses achieve their business objectives. Needs will change, often quite quickly, and priorities must be re-assessed regularly to ensure that they are still appropriate. It will also be important to build on what employers already do, particularly to build on informal learning which makes up a significant part of the learning within firms. Differences in employer type, size, sector and aspiration need to be taken into account when providing support.

Few government education and training initiatives have had a significant impact on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Given the increasing importance of SMEs to the economy, this balance needs to be redressed. More creative approaches might be necessary for very small and micro-businesses for which the Small Business Service, or any government related support service, might not be the first port of call.

D: meeting the needs of employees

The extent to which the education and training system actively encourages individuals to take control of their learning or to be influential customers is relatively limited. The State still largely prescribes qualifications and decides what can be funded at public expense. Greater flexibility and customisation are required to ensure that qualifications keep pace with demands for new skills for both 16–19 foundation training and continuing professional development (CPD).

Ways need to be found of engaging those for whom employers might not be the most effective avenue of engagement: part-time and casual workers; self-employed and freelance workers; as well as unemployed, early retired and older workers. Measures also need to be taken to promote the recruitment of non-traditional entrants by training providers responsible for sectors where ethnic minority groups have been traditionally under-represented, such as construction and engineering.

Much also needs to be done to help people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve parity in terms of opportunities to gain employment. Opportunities for people with learning difficulties and disabilities to achieve accreditation are not matched by opportunities for progression into employment.

Regarding adult learning more generally, the workplace represents a huge, under-exploited opportunity to bring more people into learning, particularly those with fewer skills.

E: the content of vocational learning programmes

A new set of generic vocational skills is required in addition to changes in specialist vocational skills to support the development of the future economy. It needs to provide for increased productivity, to deal with new technology and new skills, to show how to exploit new technology and knowledge, and provide training for innovation, evolution and changing know-how.

The challenge for education and training planners and providers is also to stimulate the demand for learning and to develop a responsive delivery system that lays down the broad foundations of learning and also secures rapid and efficient updating to meet new demands.

A training experience needs to be developed that is sufficiently broad-based to embrace the academic as well as the vocational. National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) alone do not provide a sound foundation for people entering the workforce for the first time or at a formative stage in their career and are not a sufficiently robust basis for initial vocational training. Modern Apprenticeships could bring the UK closer to its European Union partners in the proportions of young people qualified to Level 3, but there are inherent problems in their design, which make delivery difficult, and participation and achievement remain low. The absence of an alternative route to vocational qualifications through FE colleges is a cause for concern.

Customers, whether individual learners, employers or communities, should be influential in shaping the education and training supported by public funds.

F: qualifications and assessment

If publicly funded qualifications do not keep pace with demands for new skills and increasingly important employment contexts, such as small businesses, there is a danger that they will become irrelevant for both 16–19 foundation training and continuing professional development.

An additional important barrier to more responsive provision has been the emphasis on a set menu of qualification outcomes and the achievement of whole qualifications as the main indicator of success.

Without a unitised qualifications system, it is unlikely that qualifications can be rapidly updated. A unitised approach that allows mix and match within an overarching framework is required. It is the components of qualifications that should be categorised, not the qualifications themselves.

G: teaching and learning issues

The concept of training as opposed to education deserves fresh attention. It has become too narrowly defined through the introduction of competence-based models of skills acquisition. There is a need to develop a theoretical base from which to improve the pedagogy of work-based learning.

The development of some of these new skills will challenge conventional approaches to learning and assessment. Teaching and learning delivery methods may need to be adapted for small firms.

Colleges should capitalise on the opportunities for the development and practice of skills in a realistic but controlled environment, rather than apologising for the lack of real workplace assessment. There is a role for both on- and off-the-job learning through NVQs and other vocational qualifications.

Explicit partnership arrangements between schools, colleges, training providers and industry would improve practices and strategies for delivering vocational education and training.

H: the delivery of vocational learning

The current provider infrastructure might not be adequate to delivering off-the-job training in the range of occupational areas required. If off-the-job learning is delivered through classroom-based learning, unrelated to workplace experience, there is a danger that these young people will find vocational options unattractive. Features that confer 'vocational authenticity' to training and often contribute to maintaining enthusiasm and commitment to learning are important. There is a need to build the capacity of work-based providers and to develop new ways of delivering learning in the workplace

Ways of reducing the costs of training for small firms need to be found. Also, where possible, training needs to be taken out to small firms rather than based in colleges. Personal contact is a vital component of promoting learning in small firms. Colleges need to consider how to resource this.

I: quality improvement

Regular and systematic updating of the pedagogic and specialist skills of teachers and trainers is needed to ensure that they are able to deliver effectively the knowledge and skills required to support economic competitiveness.

However, there has been little sustained and systematic development of staff in the work-based sector and the range of programmes available for young people may not be meeting the needs of all learners in work-based learning. Individual staff in FE colleges keep themselves up to date in a variety of ways, but there is no coherent approach to updating vocational staff across the sector.

Colleges that have succeeded in forging relationships with local firms have been those that have invested in extensive staff development programmes.

J: the provider/employer interface

Getting employers involved in learning is challenging. Employers will want to be convinced, not only that they have the capacity to provide appropriate learning support to learners, but also that there are sound commercial arguments for investing time in learning activities.

Training providers can face a variety of problems, from a lack of commitment to learning on the part of some employers, to concerns about the difficulties, for both tutors and workplace supervisors, of coping with learners who may need substantial support. These difficulties may be more pronounced when training providers are attempting to find work-based learning opportunities for 'harder to help' learners.

Providers need to be involved in many other support activities to engage employers in learning. These include relationship marketing, awareness-raising, providing information and general involvement in the everyday life of the business community. There is a need for more specialist support, such as specific identification of training needs, research and technical support to develop new products or new working practices.

Brokers can play a key role. Employers are more likely to be receptive to brokers who can promote the goals of higher profit and business success through a range of services and facilities with learning as a key component.

Strategic alliances between employers and education training providers can add more value to learning opportunities than is likely to result from a more traditional producer/supplier relationship.

Key characteristics of responsiveness to employer and learner needs might include: the capacity to identify skills gaps and assess individual needs; a clear articulation of needs in a common language; expert staff able to work flexibly without detriment to regular provision; and the capacity to customise training packages.

K: partnerships – the role of others

Achieving success in skills development depends on the involvement and contribution of a range of other organisations. LSDA has drawn attention to the need to involve, among others, National Training Organisations (NTOs), now Sector Skills Councils (SSCs), trade unions, learning brokers, advice and guidance organisations, and has suggested contributions that each party might make.

Trade unions can be influential in promoting confidence and changing cultural attitudes, for example, by: encouraging peer support for learning in the workplace; giving credibility to work-based learning initiatives; reaching out to non-traditional learners in partnership with providers; using lobbying and brokerage powers to demand learning; and taking steps to enrich work content.

The SSCs need to establish effective working relationships that earn them authority. They should engage in dialogue with learning providers to advise constructively on ways to improve and extend the learning provision on offer.

A: the contribution of further education to economic development

Overview

LSDA developed a series of strategic research from 1997 onwards on further education and economic development, entitled 'Furthering local economies'. The series aimed to identify and analyse the role of FE colleges in relation to economic development in England and Wales and sought ways of expanding and developing these roles. It made a number of strategic recommendations regarding steps that needed to be taken by government and others to promote collaboration and in relation to the funding of post-16 providers. There is potential for these issues to be addressed by the new post-16 learning and skills policy framework.

A key driver of this work was the recognition that the new Labour government brought with it an increased interest in regional economic development, employment and skill issues.

As part of the research series, LSDA proposed ways of improving college responsiveness to the local and regional economy, including adopting a focus on benchmarking college performance. It also developed a learning analysis tool to help college managers and staff determine staff development needs in relation to competence in economic development and partnership work.

Additional related information may be found in J: developing provider/employer relationships.

Key documents

Strategic reviews and policy advice

26, 25

Research reports

28

Developmental advice, practices and strategies

3, 16, 27

Key messages

- Further education is already making a major contribution on a range of economic development fronts. The colleges' brokerage role, as organisations at the heart of their communities, is often neglected.
- Colleges play three key roles in relation to economic development as stakeholders, service providers and strategic partners.
- Colleges are often overlooked in the debate about skills strategies and economic development.
- There is now considerable consensus about the role further education plays in economic development but also a belief that colleges could do more.
- Colleges could usefully position themselves as leading-edge human resource (HR) developers.

Issues

The roles played by FE colleges in economic development

Further education makes a major contribution on a range of economic development fronts:

- skills – especially aiding the labour force, including the unemployed, to acquire higher levels of skill
- employment – in helping the unemployed to access jobs, and contributing to in-company HR development activity
- small firms – including consultancy, staff and management training, business growth programmes and networking activities
- technology – in applying innovation and training in the usages and transfers of new technologies
- leisure, tourism and cultural industries – especially providing training in these fields of employment, often linked to college-based sites and facilities
- urban regeneration – including employment and enterprise initiatives with regeneration areas and community development activity
- business retention – particularly in consultancy and training to help firms remain competitive and retain jobs
- inward investment – as part of the 'landing net' (that is, the process of seeking and securing new employment and after-care services)

- productivity – including applications of new processes and technologies
- economic expansion – in providing support to new industries and companies
- town centres – especially providing services integrated with other town centre agencies.

(James and Clark 1997)

Colleges play three key roles in relation to economic development as:

- stakeholders – where colleges are significant operators as well as employers, purchasers and contractors, property owners, developers, neighbours and corporate citizens
- service providers – colleges provide services directly to people, businesses and other organisations
- strategic partners – where colleges individually or collectively contribute to the leadership or coordination of economic development strategies and initiatives through civic commitment, partnership bodies, planning and inter-agency liaison.

(James 1998)

Addressing the traditional neglect of FE in economic development

Colleges are often overlooked in the debate about skills strategies and economic development. The creation of Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) was seen to offer colleges an opportunity to become players.

There is now considerable consensus about the role further education plays in economic development but also a belief that colleges could do more. There are also many divergent or specialist or niche roles which colleges are developing according to local and regional circumstances.

(James and Clark 1997)

The need for collaboration with a range of local partners

Collaboration between FE colleges and other agencies at local and regional level is important but difficult because of problems caused by the separation of funding for further education from the funding for other agencies engaged in economic development.

The role of FE colleges in working face to face with businesses and employers, especially small ones, needs to be built upon. But the approach and interventions need to be more strategically attuned to regional development strategies and opportunities, rather than *ad-hoc*, catch-all approaches.

The new universities represent key partners for further education in their roles in economic development and need to be addressed pro-actively. However, partnerships with FE institutions are severely constrained by the lack of regional and sub-regional

coordination among colleges. Colleges also need to attend to relationships with local government as a matter of urgency.

(James and Clark 1997)

Approaches to development

Applying business excellence models to FE colleges

Colleges must position themselves as leading-edge human resource developers. To achieve this, colleges must discover international benchmarking as world-class manufacturers have done so successfully.

Key elements of a performance benchmarking focus might include:

- business strategy – vision and leadership; a quality mindset; new technology; productivity gains
- delivery – flexible accommodation; pull-scheduling; customer orientation; resources ahead of customer expectation; just-in-time supply
- quality – external benchmarking; accreditation processes; qualification durability
- design – lead times; concurrent design; customer input
- employee management – shared vision; continuous improvement strategies; training and development
- financing growth – added value per employee; return on assets; gearing ratio
- competitive advantage – price; quality; cycle times; reliability; customisation

(Hughes C in James 1998)

Identifying FE college staff development needs in economic development

There is a need to develop economic development and partnership competence for FE staff and management.

LSDA published a learning needs analysis tool in *Competence and competitiveness* (Johnston and James 2000). It is aimed at staff engaged in local economic development activities in relation to strategy and project development in a partnership setting where colleges collaborate with others.

(Johnston and James 2000)

B: developing the strategic policy framework

Overview

LSDA has drawn upon a range of research and analyses by government departments, think tanks and other economic observers to inform its thinking about how learning providers might best develop learning and skills provision to meet economic needs. Policy development papers and consultation responses by LSDA in 2000 highlighted the need for, and possible key dimensions of, a national skills strategy.

Key themes of LSDA's work on developing the strategic policy framework included: the need for learning providers to become more responsive to economic needs; and the importance of developing the role of informed suppliers rather than relying solely upon strategic planning processes. A particular emphasis of the Agency's work has been on the importance of colleges finding ways of working effectively with small firms.

A number of the issues raised in LSDA policy papers and responses, such as issues relating to funding regimes and the problems of competition by colleges with TECs (Training and Enterprise Councils) to meet learning and funding targets, are now being addressed by the post-16 learning and skills policy framework. (Note: The local Training and Enterprise Councils in England and Wales were charged with stimulating the demand for training by individuals and local businesses and promoting the local economy. They were subsumed into the local Learning and Skills Councils in April 2001.)

Many of the issues and development proposals identified in this topic at a strategic policy level are returned to in more detail in later sections of this report, specifically, at: section C on meeting employers needs; section D on meeting employee needs; section E on the content of learning programmes; section F on qualifications and assessment issues; and section J on developing the provider/employer relationships.

Key documents

Strategic reviews and policy advice

4, 10, 11, 18, 33, 40, 42

Research reports

21

Key messages

- Developing a skilled and educated workforce able to respond to changing economic demands is the most important factor in securing economic competitiveness. This priority, and the important role of the FE sector could play in meeting it, has been least clearly articulated through specific initiatives aimed at education and training providers.

- There is little certainty about the specific skills that will be required in future. Accurate skills predictions are not achievable. Broad changes in generic skills may be identified, but the specific skills that will be needed in the new economy cannot be predicted with confidence.

- In the UK there is a widespread lack of a sense of occupational identity as a source of self-worth.

- A strategy for workforce development must start from the perspective of business solutions for employers and access to life chances for employees.

- Any strategy also needs to distinguish between different types of employers and the workforce; a 'one size fits all' approach will not work.

- There needs to be a cultural change in the value placed on vocational skills and qualifications by promoting learning as a key ingredient in business success.

- Stark distinctions between initiatives aimed at widening participation and combating social exclusion and those associated with skills development and high standards of achievement are unhelpful. In reality, these issues are closely connected.

- The government's role should be more strategic than tactical. Government should set the framework for others to provide the detail.

- There should be a looser take on what planning can provide combined with greater confidence in the ability of providers and employers to solve emerging skills problems rapidly and in partnership, which may result in more effective learning solutions.

Issues

Forecasting future skills needs

Analyses and forecasts of the current and future economic environment indicate there are likely to be less stable employment patterns; greater demands in most occupations for a wider range of new skills; rapid technological change; and greater reliance on individual responsibility, initiative and enterprise.

However, there is little certainty about the specific skills that will be required in future. Accurate skills predictions are not achievable. Broad changes in generic skills may be identified, but the specific skills that will be needed in the new economy cannot be predicted with confidence.

(Hughes and Mager 2000)

The need for strategies that address skills and workforce development

Arguably, developing a skilled and educated workforce able to respond to changing economic demands is the most important factor in securing economic competitiveness. This priority, and the important role of the FE sector could play in meeting it, has been least clearly articulated through specific initiatives aimed at education and training providers.
The skills agenda is of crucial interest to the FE sector, but the role of the FE sector in skills development to support economic competitiveness is largely unexplored.

(Hughes and Mager 2000)

Problems to be addressed by skills and workforce development strategies

In the UK there is a widespread lack of a sense of occupational identity as a source of self-worth. It arises from a number of factors.

Supply-side issues

- While the supply side [learning providers] is responsive, it tends to respond to the needs of individuals and is reactive rather than proactive.

- A potential mismatch between qualifications offered by FE colleges and the opportunities in the labour market resulted from the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) funding method requiring colleges to increase student numbers, lack of labour market information and competition with TECs for targets. (Note: The FEFC was responsible for allocating funds put at its disposal by parliament to FE colleges in England, and to local authorities and others for those FE courses prescribed in schedule 2 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. It was later subsumed into the LSC in April 2001.).

- The central challenge for the FE sector is to secure a robust fit between skills development and the needs of the economy to ensure that provision is relevant.

Employer issues

- There is a lack of clear signals from the labour market about the value of qualifications.

- Employers can sometimes take a narrow view of skills needs.

- There can be inequality of access to workplace learning opportunities, with the main beneficiaries of spending on workplace vocational education and training being the young, the more highly skilled and those working in larger organisations.

Pre-vocational issues

- Too many unqualified young people are entering the labour market. Only 60% of young people in the UK are at Level 2 or higher and only 40% have Level 3 qualifications.
- There is a lack of a reputable full-time route to Level 3. Existing UK apprenticeship provision and successful achievement of the full qualification remains too rare.
- A low value is placed on vocational qualifications compared with academic success.
- Colleges have been under pressure to develop academic streams and compete for students with schools, sixth form colleges and HE institutions.

(Hughes C 2000)
(Hughes 2002a)
(Huddleston and Unwin in Stanton and Richardson 1997)

Approaches to development

A focus on business needs

Workforce development strategies must start from the perspective of business solutions for employers and access to life chances for employees. Strategies need to segment employers and the workforce – a 'one size fits all' approach will not work.

There needs to be a cultural change in the value placed on vocational skills and qualifications by promoting learning as a key ingredient in business success.

Ways need to be sought to achieve a more effective interaction between national policies on workforce development, intermediate actions and individual companies.

Incentives should be provided for employers to support workforce development and continued vocational training.

Ways should be examined to support training for self employed and casual workers.

The success of brokerage schemes such as union learning representatives and the Small Business Service in encouraging greater participation in learning should be evaluated and supported.

(Hughes 2002a)

An inclusive approach

Stark distinctions between initiatives aimed at widening participation and combating social exclusion and those associated with skills development and high standards of achievement are unhelpful. In reality, these issues are closely connected.

A stronger regulatory framework for workforce development should be introduced, including equality of access to workplace learning opportunities.

(Hughes and Mager 2000)

An approach that develops the supply and demand sides

There is a need for a range of initiatives that address both the demand and the supply sides. Previous policy on skills formation has been highly supply-side focused.

Providers need to be able to develop new learning programmes rapidly to meet needs. Regulatory and quality monitoring frameworks should support rapid product development.

Regions should be encouraged to demand learning. Regional development agencies are important stakeholders – develop their capacity to provide an effective source of demand.

The flow of poorly qualified young people onto the labour market should cease.

(Hughes and Mager 2000)

The role of government

The government's role should be more strategic than tactical. Government should set the framework for others to provide the detail. Policy development and its implementation need to be developed alongside each other, with ongoing discussions between policy-makers and providers. There is a limit to the extent to which strategy and practice can be determined through the intervention of government. A strong and confident provider network should be developed, working within a robust regulatory framework.

(Hughes and Mager 2000)

A role for employers

Unions and employees can exert pressures, but employers hold the key to increasing the demand for learning in the workplace through: requiring or encouraging higher skills among employees; showing that successful learning will be recognised and rewarded; enabling employees to deploy new skills and knowledge; and providing material and financial support for continued vocational training.

Informal levers such as exhortation, advice and help, provision of learning facilities and encouragement of union learning representatives might help engage employers; however, it is clear that the UK's voluntary approach towards employers' responsibility to train employees has had only limited success. Introduction of tougher regulatory requirements in the UK, effective in other countries, could be successful in increasing demand for training.

Persuasive tax incentives would give employers more encouragement to train their staff.

Proactive brokerage services might also help; employers are more likely to be receptive to brokers who can promote the goals of higher profit and business success through a range of services and facilities.

However, policy on adult learning cannot rely exclusively on employers. Broader labour market and economic concerns, not to mention the individual career needs of individuals, will sometimes require provision delivered away from the workplace and funded accordingly.

Partnership approaches to workplace learning might have a role in this country such as the workplace partnerships being developed by UNISON. In the Netherlands, a more coercive approach is taken – there is a strong emphasis by state on individual responsibility to maintain employability.

(Hughes, Keddie, Webb and Corney 2002)
(Taylor and Cameron 2001)

A role for post-16 learning providers

There is a role for the 'informed supplier'. We need to become comfortable with diversity of mission in the post-compulsory education and training system. Further education colleges should be expected to be less of all things to all people; there should be more differentiation with the emergence of distinct skills missions. Colleges should be expected to conduct their own intelligent analysis of labour markets, skills development and economic trends in their area.

Vocational education and training providers should be more actively involved in the planning and decision-making process, particularly at local level and at the level of specific transactions with employers and individuals. Informed providers that have an intelligent analysis of their own labour markets, skills development and economic trends in their area would be more responsive and more effective and remove necessity for layers of planning and intermediaries.

There should be a looser take on what planning can provide combined with greater confidence in the ability of providers and employers to solve emerging skills problems rapidly and in partnership, which might result in more effective learning solutions.

More specialist and more expert providers would allow for the development of the informed supplier, which would be proactive in developing new products and services not yet demanded by customers and anticipating the labour market needs and local economy needs, rather than as passive instruments of delivery.

(Hughes and Mager 2000)
(Hughes 2000)

Developing the capacity of learning providers to be responsive

The capacity of post-16 providers to respond to skills needs should be developed:

- providers need to respond to and anticipate changes to the learning and skills curriculum, in terms of content, delivery and assessment
- key players need to be aware of, articulate and understand new skills demands

- providers need to be able to develop rapidly new learning programmes to meet needs. Regulatory and quality monitoring frameworks should support rapid product development
- there should be regular and systematic updating of pedagogic and specialist skills
- customers should have influence over what is delivered.

To help providers to achieve these aims, they need:

- flexible funding which subsidises non-qualification provision as well as that leading to qualifications
- flexible qualifications to meet the needs for a range of individual requirements within a strong regulatory framework
- development of their skills to deliver including the capacity to design curriculum packages and deliver in a range of appropriate ways, using a range of techniques.

(Hughes 2002a)

C: meeting employer needs

Overview

Key themes of LSDA's work on this topic include the lack of initiatives to address small business and the need to understand the needs of small business so that they may be addressed successfully. LSDA has conducted several pieces of work which aim to understand and identify the learning needs of business, particularly small firms, and ways in which colleges and other learning providers can work effectively with them, including developing the role of the learning broker.

LSDA's work on this topic is divided between research projects aimed at identifying issues and evaluating practices that might be effective, drawing upon international research, and practical advice and guidance on how to work with employers, particular small and micro-businesses.

Further relevant information on developing relationships between employers and learning providers, including improving provider responsiveness to employer needs, may be found in section J on developing the provider/employer relationship. Topics E, F and H review work on the developing the content, assessment and delivery of vocational education and training respectively.

Key documents

Strategic reviews and policy advice

11, 33, 40, 42

Research reports

14, 21

Developmental advice, practices and strategies

29, 30, 31

Key messages

- Few government education and training initiatives have had a significant emphasis on impact on SMEs. Given the increasing importance of SMEs to the economy, this balance needs to be redressed.
- Differences in employer type, size and sector and aspiration need to be taken into account when providing support.
- The primary focus of any skills or workforce development strategy should be helping businesses to achieve their business objectives.

- Needs will change, often quite quickly, and priorities must be re-assessed regularly to ensure that they are still appropriate.
- It is important to build on what employers already do, and to recognise and value the informal learning that makes up a significant part of learning within firms.
- College image and reputation with employers is important and should be addressed as part of marketing efforts to ensure that employers think of them as natural sources of training and support.
- More creative approaches might be necessary for very small and micro-businesses for which the Small Business Service, or any government agency, might not be the first port of call.

Issues

Meeting the diverse needs of employers

There is some debate as to whether employers can be supported by one vision of post-16 education and training given their diversity of scope size and aspirations

The needs of employers should be defined through research rather than by committee.
(Stanton and Richardson 1997)

Lack of focus of policy initiatives on the needs of small employers

There are many examples of interesting practice and a plethora of initiatives to support workforce development. Few of these initiatives, however, have had a significant impact on the development of the workforce in small and medium-sized enterprises. Given the increasing importance of SMEs to the economy, this balance needs to be redressed.

Small and medium-sized enterprises are not a homogenous group and differences in sectors and size need to be taken into account when providing support. It is important to understand the client base – colleges should beware offering solutions without understanding the problems.

(Hughes 2002a)
(Hughes, Keddie, Webb and Corney 2002)
(LSDA 2000)

Meeting the particular needs of small firms

Very small firms usually face different problems, requiring different solutions, from those faced by bigger companies. Many very small firms may not want or need to adopt more formal approaches to learning and workforce development. Further, they may not perceive that they have any business-related or human resource-related, training needs.

Once small and medium-sized firms realise they require assistance, it can be difficult for them to determine what is appropriate and what is available locally.

There is a need to value and improve the quality of informal learning without distorting its nature. LSDA research shows that much of the training that takes place in small firms is not codified or accredited.

(Hughes 2002a)

[With regard to small firms], there is not a clear set of support needs which can be expressed and then catered for. An organic, interactive model involving discussion about identifying and meeting needs is required, through dialogue between the customer and the provider in a normal supply chain relationship. This challenges the capacity of a careful annual planning cycle to meet the needs of small and medium-sized employers. The operation of the new learning and skills sector must not rely unduly on annual planning systems, but must facilitate local customer–provider dialogue to identify and address immediate needs.

(Mager 2000)

College image and reputation with employers

Colleges need to address their image with SMEs – they may not think of them as a natural source of training and support.

(LSDA 2001a)

Approaches to development

Business focus

The primary focus of any skills or workforce development strategy should be helping organisations achieve their business objectives. Providers need to create products, services and solutions for business as well as courses, seminars and learning, all informed by business objectives. There needs to be a shift from an inventory-driven approach where what is on offer largely depends upon what has always been provided.

Up-skilling programmes need to be based on a careful analysis of the skills of the individual and those required in the specific job role.

(Hughes 2002a)

Effective marketing

Developing and maintaining a good reputation with SMEs depends on effective marketing and management of these services. Providers should ensure that it is clear to companies who is selling what; to whom, how, when, for how long, where and at what price.

The SME clients need to see added advantage in terms of improved business performance, or in the reduction of risks associated with the business.

Securing greater employer involvement in learning within small firms requires an emphasis on business support, rather than learning in itself. Effective support will need far greater interaction between the various providers of support to ensure that information on needs is matched by the capacity of those responsible for delivering different types of support and business solutions.

Unless the benefits of the service are seen to provide a potential improvement for the overall organisation and for the member of its staff who will directly receive the services, the business may not see the value of releasing staff or paying for training.

(LSDA 2001a)

Addressing the particular learning needs of small firms

Gathering the views of small businesses on their development needs is crucial to determining ways in which learning and support services can help them to sustain and improve their performance levels. Views need to be gathered regularly and the knowledge gained used within a periodic review of the services marketed to them.

Along with the primary demand for core skills training, SMEs may require external assistance for many other reasons, for instance, due to new legislation. Some legislation may apply solely to organisations in specific sectors, such as food hygiene in the catering sector. The new employment laws, such as the Working Time Regulations, statutory National Minimum Wage and the Fairness at Work proposals through the Employment Relations Act, illustrate the [then] new regulations which apply to all organisations to some degree. Needs will change, often quite quickly, and priorities must be re-assessed regularly to ensure that they are still appropriate.

Perhaps one of the most useful services is to be imaginative in capitalising on high-profile initiatives, especially those current ones that relate to the use of computers.

(Hughes and Gray 1997)
(LSDA 2001a)
(Hughes 2002a)

Developing appropriate learning styles for small firms

The workplace provides an environment which has the potential to develop many different types of skill and knowledge. In many small businesses, employers and employees are learning from their everyday experiences, perhaps in informal ways. Providers of support for small businesses should perhaps concentrate on the development of capacity to learn informally in the workplace, and the relationship between this informal learning and more formal learning.

(Hughes 2002)

The role of learning brokers and small and micro-businesses

Those typical smaller firms without training specialists on their payrolls, may well have insufficient resources or capability to match their analysed needs with the available courses which are supported locally. They require colleges to offer courses that are well backed up by college staff, who know their subject and who can help firms relate the course contents to their work situation. The smaller firm typically needs assistance to ensure that course objectives match the potential trainee's needs as well as the smaller firm's own organisational needs.

More creative approaches might be necessary for very small and micro-businesses for which the SBS, or any government-related agency, might not be the first port of call. Such firms tend to build professional identities around informal networks, small clubs and gatherings. Effective brokers will need to find supportive ways to link with networks and groups of this kind.

(LSDA 2000)
(Hughes 2002a)

D: meeting the needs of individuals (as in-service employees or as pre-service trainees)

Overview

Work by LSDA identifies workplace learning as important not only to improving business productivity and the skills of workers, but also as an important means of engaging adults in learning more generally. Research into specific occupational contexts, including technical-level engineering and the electrotechnical industry, and more generally has identified a number of barriers to recruitment into vocational training.

Other pieces of work have drawn attention to the need to develop inclusive workforce development strategies for those already in the workforce, and offer guidance and good practice suggestions in relation to assisting those who wish to enter work to do so.

Further relevant material is reviewed in section B on developing a strategic framework for skills and workforce development; sections E and F on the content of programmes and qualifications; section H on delivery of learning; and section I on quality improvement.

Key documents

Strategic reviews and policy advice

11, 42, 40

Research reports

21, 36, 38

Developmental advice, practices and strategies

15, 23, 24, 37

Key messages

- The workplace represents a huge, under-exploited opportunity to bring more people into learning, particularly the less skilled.
- The workplace is a point where people gather may provide opportunities to reach out to a wider range of non-learners and so stimulate their desire to take part in learning.
- Basic skills needs within organisations are not necessarily limited to workers in the lowest-skilled jobs.

- The education and training system does not encourage learners to take control of their learning or to be influential customers. Publicly funded qualifications struggle to keep pace with demands for new skills.

- Ways need to be found of engaging those for whom employers may not be the most effective avenue of engagement – part-time and casual workers, self-employed and freelance workers as well as unemployed, early retired and older workers.

- Measures need to be taken to promote the recruitment of non-traditional entrants by training providers responsible for sectors where ethnic minority groups have been traditionally under-represented, such as construction and engineering.

- For young people preparing to enter the workforce, there are a number of barriers to increasing recruitment to vocational occupations such as engineering.

- Much needs to be done to help people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve parity in terms of opportunities to gain employment. Opportunities for people with learning difficulties and disabilities to achieve accreditation are not matched by opportunities for progression into employment.

Issues

The role of the workplace as a place for learning

Workers in very small companies may not perceive tangible learning needs relating to their work role. Nevertheless, the workplace as a point where people gather may provide opportunities to reach out to a wider range of non-learners and so stimulate their desire to take part in learning.

(Hughes, Keddie, Webb and Corney 2002)

Overcoming barriers to participation in learning

Most adults, including those with no FE or training after compulsory schooling, will be employed for most of their working life. Therefore the workplace represents a huge, under-exploited opportunity to bring more people into learning, particularly the less skilled. But employees still face a number of barriers to taking up learning including a lack of financial support, and time off to learn, apprehension about taking up learning after a long break and uncertainty about whether personal investment in training will pay off in terms of better pay and prospects.

In a project that investigated factors affecting recruitment to higher technician-level engineering, providers and young people involved in the training identified what they saw as the main barriers to increasing recruitment:

- the public image of engineering as insecure employment

- a lack of understanding of career possibilities and qualifications

- insufficient access to schools to explain about engineering and promote it as a career

- the cultural pressure for academic rather than vocational study
- the belief that engineering is too difficult
- schools' over-emphasis on IT and simulation
- embedded issues relating to equal opportunities.

To encourage individuals and employers, there needs to be appropriate and attractive learning opportunities which are affordable and easily accessible and which could be a major factor in stimulating demand for learning. Improving the supply of learning provision can influence demand.

(Hughes, Keddie, Webb, and Corney 2002)
(Shirley and Weiss 2001)
(Hughes 2002a)
(Taylor and Cameron 2001)

Developing the learning and skills policy framework

The extent to which the education and training system actively encourages individuals to take control of their learning or to be influential customers is relatively limited. The State still largely prescribes qualifications and what can be funded at public expense. If publicly funded qualifications do not keep pace with demands for new skills, there is a danger that they will become irrelevant for both 16–19 foundation training and continuing professional development.

A further danger is that a gap will be created between those who, or whose employer's, can afford to pay for qualifications which secure a good rate of return in terms of pay and promotion, and those who have to rely on the state-funded system. Can the current model of so-called employer-led post-16 education and training meet the needs of individuals as well as employers?

(Stanton and Richardson1997)
(Hughes 2002a)

Approaches to development

Improving awareness and attractiveness of vocational training for prospective trainees

An LSDA expert seminar made proposals for how some of the barriers ... could be reduced in the specific context of engineering, including:

- greater promotion of engineering through a wider range of products
- improving careers advice to emphasise possible goals and the variety of opportunities

- funding to encourage schools to form partnerships with providers and engineering businesses
- proactive promotion of equal opportunities in the providers and in the workplace
- greater recognition of the role and status of the technician engineer.

(Shirley and Weiss 2001)

Engaging the wider workforce

Ways need to be found of engaging those for whom employers may not be the most effective avenue of engagement – part-time and casual workers, self-employed and freelance workers as well as unemployed, early retired and older workers.

Measures need to be taken to promote the recruitment of non-traditional entrants by training providers responsible for sectors where ethnic minority groups have been traditionally under-represented, such as construction and engineering.

In these contexts, research needs to be undertaken into the:

- industrial sectors, or types of employers/employment, where employees are least likely to receive time off for study/colleges
- extent to which particular groups are over-represented among those in sectors/companies with low levels of day release or equivalent provision.

(Hughes 2002a)

Learners with basic skills needs

Basic skills needs within organisations are not necessarily limited to workers in the lowest-skilled jobs. An approach that emphasises the need for basic skills to lay the foundation for further learning will be in danger of ignoring the literacy or numeracy needs of workers who already hold positions of responsibility.

There is an assumption that the main effort should be concentrated on those with the lowest level of skills. In practice, we may not have sufficient information about precise needs in specific jobs, and the ways these are changing, to make such decisions. For example, the training of managers and supervisors in areas such as drafting user-friendly notices and memos may well constitute a priority area which does not necessarily coincide with 'lowest skills equals greatest need'.

(Payne 2003)

Vocational learning for unemployed people: the New Deal

New Deal is a major government programme that provides support for the long-term unemployed to find work. It tests colleges' ability to respond flexibly to individual needs. Problems have been experienced in providing an adequate range of options, available throughout the year, to ensure that each New Deal client has an appropriate and high-quality learning experience. This requires commitment across the whole of the college. While there are pockets of good practice in delivering the full-time education and training option, few colleges have managed to achieve high quality in all aspects of New Deal

delivery. Evidence from inspection indicates that there is significant room for improvement. This is likely to increase as unemployment reduces and the pool of people who are eligible for New Deal increasingly become the 'hard to help'.

Colleges that are most successful in delivering New Deal have effective working relationships with employers and a strong support system for the clients. Securing the active involvement of employers is difficult but essential. The converse of this is that employers are experiencing difficulty in filling vacancies, and may welcome the opportunity to take on New Deal graduates if support is provided.

(Ratcliffe *et al* 2001)

The guide by Ratcliffe *et al*, entitled *Developing good practice in New Deal in colleges*, provides guidance and case study examples on a number of aspects of how colleges might improve their delivery of New Deal programmes, including:

- improving the transition into full-time education and training and ensuring learner-centred delivery of programmes
- assessing and delivering basic and key skills
- monitoring and tracking participants' progress, achievement and progression
- improving links with employers and work preparation activities
- the strategic planning and management of training
- staff development and quality improvement issues.

Assisting people with learning difficulties or disabilities into work

Much needs to be done to help people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve parity in terms of opportunities to gain employment. Opportunities for people with learning difficulties and disabilities to achieve accreditation are not matched by opportunities for progression into employment. Supported employment schemes can be effective in helping people obtain and maintain employment. If good links are established with supported employment agencies, colleges can be the first point of contact when clients require further training. Colleges should therefore:

- build up a picture of local provision
- establish early links with supported employment agencies for individual students
- offer work preparation accreditation to students with learning difficulties
- offer vocational training in real working environments.

(Hughes and Kingsford 1997)

A good practice checklist set out in Hughes and Kingsford 1997 suggests the need to:

- tailor support to meet individuals' needs, but with high expectations of clients

- develop and maintain effective links with families and carers
- inform clients about the implications of working and effects on benefits
- include: vocational assessment followed by job-tasters and job matching; initial and ongoing training; and job analysis, spending adequate time on these elements
- involve effective liaison with employers and provide support for employers as well as for the client
- provide an effective follow-up service including ongoing support for employers and employees, including natural support in the workplace
- be adequately funded to provide appropriate support
- involve effective liaison with other relevant agencies to secure a coordinated approach.

E: the content of vocational learning programmes

Overview

A key message from LSDA's work on the content of learning programmes is concern about the capacity of current vocational learning opportunities to provide relevant, up-to-date and sufficiently broad-based learning, particularly for those training for occupations. There is considerable consensus about the skills and learning that are needed; the issue is about how best to develop effective programmes that will deliver this learning. Themes from research and good practice reports include: the need for a whole-college approach to curriculum development; and the importance of customers influencing the content of programmes.

Much of the work review in this section comes from research and policy advice papers in response to a number of government consultations. Other useful material is reviewed in topic F on qualifications and assessment, topic G on teaching and learning issues, and topic H on the delivery of learning.

Key documents

Strategic reviews and policy advice

4, 7, 11, 18, 20, 40, 42

Research reports

12, 35, 39

Key messages

- There are growing concerns that NVQs alone do not provide a sound foundation for people entering the workforce for the first time or at a formative stage in their career and are not a sufficiently robust basis for initial vocational training.
- Modern Apprenticeships (MA) currently offer the opportunity to bring the UK closer to its EU partners in the proportions of young people qualified to Level 3, but low participation and achievement in MA programmes is a major concern.
- Education for economic purposes is fairly straightforward. It needs to provide for increased productivity; to deal with new technology and new skills; to show how to exploit new technology and knowledge; and provide training for innovation, evolution, changing know-how.
- A new set of generic vocational skills is required in addition to changes in specialist vocational skills to support the development of the future economy.
- The challenge for education and training planners and providers is to stimulate the demand for learning and to develop a responsive delivery system that lays down the

broad foundations of learning and also secures rapid and efficient updating to meet new demands.

- Colleges and some employers working with them want to develop a training experience sufficiently broad-based to embrace the academic as well as the vocational.
- Customers, whether individual learners, employers or communities, should be influential in shaping the education and training supported by public funds.
- Improving the vocational content of the curriculum often requires a whole-centre approach to ensure maximum benefit for students.

Issues

What programmes should offer

Education for economic purposes is fairly straightforward. It needs to provide for increased productivity, needs to deal with new technology and new skills and it needs to show how to exploit new technology and knowledge and provide training for innovation, evolution, and changing know-how.

(Hughes 2000)

Reforms of post-16 learning have stressed the importance of the key skills of Communication, Application of Number and IT. The wider key skills of Improving own Learning and Performance, Working with Others and Problem solving have received less attention – this is at odds with much research evidence which points to the wider key skills as being highly regarded by employers. These skills are of great value in helping people succeed.

(Smeaton, Hughes and Hall 2002)

A new set of generic vocational skills is required in addition to changes in specialist vocational skills to support the development of the future economy. These skills will enhance the capacity to take initiative and risks and to apply knowledge creatively, the capacity to work effectively in teams and to cope with uncertainty and change, and the capacity to turn ideas into action and information into understanding and judgement.

(Hughes and Mager 2000)

The need for customer influence upon the content of learning programmes

The extent to which the education and training system actively encourages individuals to take control of their learning or to be influential customers is relatively limited. The State still largely prescribes qualifications and what can be funded at public expense.

Customers, whether they are individual learners, employers or communities, should be influential in shaping the education and training supported by public funds.

(Stanton and Richardson 1997)

The need for broader-based vocational programmes

Little attempt has (so far) been made to create programmes which combine the opportunity to learn job-specific skills, to which many young people are attracted, as well as continuing with an academic education. Some of the occupation structures associated with Modern Apprenticeships are showing that employers working with colleges want to develop a sufficiently broad-based training experience that embraces the academic as well as the vocational.

(Huddleston and Unwin, chapter 7 in Stanton and Richardson 1997)

There is a growing concerns that NVQs alone do not provide a sound foundation for people entering the workforce for the first time or at a formative stage in their career and are not a sufficiently robust basis for initial vocational training. Two particular issues emerge.

- Low-level NVQs offer a very limited and basic vocational education and training menu in comparison to education and training programmes in other countries. Even at Level 3, providers have to find ways of covering the necessary underpinning knowledge by turning to other qualifications, notably BTEC National and GNVQ units.

- NVQs fail to meet employers' needs, either because they are inflexible or because they are not specific enough.

(Smeaton, Hughes and Hall 2002)

[The then] FEDA welcomed the recognition in the proposed reforms that greater emphasis should be placed on underpinning knowledge and understanding in the Modern Apprenticeship (MA) framework. This acknowledges that the NVQ approach, designed to assess competence in the workplace, provides an inadequate basis for training young people who are entering the workplace for the first time.

(Hughes 2000a)

Modern Apprenticeships currently offer the best hope of bringing the UK closer to its EU partners in the proportions of young people qualified to level 3.

(Taylor and Cameron 2001)

However, low participation and achievement within Modern Apprenticeships programme is a cause for concern

(Hughes 2002b)

The need for flexible, responsive programmes

Continuous updating and development is important for all and will require a flexible and modernised delivery system to secure appropriate learning opportunities and engage a wider range of learners. The challenge for education and training planners and providers is to stimulate the demand for learning and to develop a responsive delivery system that lays down the broad foundations of learning and also secures rapid and efficient updating to meet new demands.

(Hughes and Mager 2000)

The post-16 curriculum needs to both respond to and anticipate the challenges of the new century. Education and training planners and providers need to constantly evaluate whether currently assessed and accredited skills and knowledge are appropriate to support economic competitiveness.

(Hughes and Mager 2000)

Guidance on how to develop employability would be helpful to a wide range of interested parties in helping to set a framework and define responsibilities.

(Hughes and Stoner 2000)

Approaches to development

Developing a wider range of vocational skills

A project by LSDA and UKSKILLS (reported in Smeaton, Hughes and Hall 2002) aimed to show how an enhanced curriculum might be provided to develop excellence in vocational training. It examined models of curriculum design as well as teaching, learning and assessment strategies. Colleges successfully identified elements that raised students' vocational and personal skill levels beyond that required by their normal curriculum.

A strong correlation was found between possession of the following key attributes and success in skills competitions:

- strong motivation and a competitive spirit among competitors
- ability to plan and organise work effectively
- consistent awareness of high standards
- resilience and the ability to work under pressure
- good social and communication skills, including those required for effective teamwork.

The experience of being involved in the skills competitions has changed the way the colleges wish to design and implement their curricula in the future. There is a need to develop teaching and learning strategies to develop these skills. The project report contains case studies and guidelines for learning providers wishing to adapt learning provision and teaching and learning methods.

(Smeaton, Hughes and Hall 2002)

Improving the vocational content of programmes

Improving the vocational content of the curriculum often requires a whole-centre approach to ensure maximum benefit for students. Consideration should be given to areas such as timetabling, staffing and resourcing. With timetabling, those responsible need to be aware that activities such as research, practicals, input from guest speakers and visits to the workplace need blocks of time if they are to be completed successfully.

Many local and national organisations can also help schools and colleges to develop and improve the vocational aspect of the curriculum. Such organisations locally would include Education Business Consortium, Education Business Partnerships, Connexions, careers services and Chambers of Commerce. Nationally, organisations such as National Training Organisations, (now Sector Skills Councils), the Department of Trade and Industry and the Learning and Skills Development Agency can provide support and resources.

(Moore 2001)

F: assessment and qualifications

Overview

In a number of pieces of work, LSDA identifies the qualifications framework as a potential barrier to improving skills, workforce development and the capacity of learning providers to be responsive to employers' and employees' needs.

Issues researched include the need for publicly funded qualifications to keep up with demand for new skills, the need for customisation and flexibility in the design of qualifications and the danger that vocational qualifications are too general to provide a sufficient vocational training.

Additional related material may be found in: topic E on content of programmes; topic G on teaching and learning; topic H on delivery; and J on developing provider/employer relationships.

Key documents

Strategic reviews and policy advice

10, 11, 33, 40

Research reports

1, 34, 29, 39

Developmental advice, practices and strategies

30, 31

Key messages

- If publicly funded qualifications do not keep pace with demands for new skills, there is a danger that they will become irrelevant for both 16–19 foundation training and continuing professional development.
- Adults are particularly ill-served by the current qualifications structure. The majority of adults have had to fund vocational training themselves.
- Without a unitised qualifications system, it is unlikely that qualifications can be rapidly updated.
- The qualifications system can also be slow to respond to newly emerging industries or to new clusters of more established industries.
- The experience of Centres of Vocational Excellence may signal the need to review the range of vocational qualifications on offer.

- There is general recognition that without modification and significant support, the NVQ system is not the ideal way of developing competence in SMEs.
- A major barrier to more responsive provision has been the emphasis on qualification outcomes and the achievement of qualifications as the main indicator of success.
- A unitised approach which allows mix and match within an overarching framework is required. It is the components of qualifications that should be categorised, not the qualifications themselves.

Issues

Linking qualifications to learner demand for skills

If publicly funded qualifications do not keep pace with demands for new skills, there is a danger that they will become irrelevant for both 16-19 foundation training and continuing professional development. Without a unitised qualifications system, it is unlikely that qualifications can be rapidly updated.

(Hughes 2002a)

Adults are particularly ill-served by the current qualifications structure. The majority of adults have had to fund vocational training themselves.

(Huddleston and Unwin, chapter 7, p160 in Stanton and Richardson 1997)

The limits of qualifications as effective proxies for skills development

A major barrier to more responsive provision has been the emphasis on a set menu of qualification outcomes and the achievement of whole qualifications as the main indicator of success. Taken together with the inflexibility of the current range of qualifications, this inevitably leads to an inventory-based approach.

The current range of qualifications may not be a suitable proxy for skills development. Targets based on qualification attainment may be problematic because they may place undue attention on how formal learning from a prescribed inventory embodied within national qualifications can be made more flexible and attractive to people who are 'non-learners'. This approach is predicated upon the belief that the main problem is access to formal learning. While this approach will work for some people in some circumstances, a more radical approach may be to look again at what people do at work, especially in small companies.

(Stanton and Richardson 1997)

Neither 'soft skills' nor specific technical and practical skills fit comfortably with existing qualifications. Where employers are concerned to develop a capable workforce, the pressure on institutions is to deliver qualifications. Thus, there is a tension between the demands of accountability and the needs of employers.

(Mager 2000)

A more responsive qualifications system

The qualifications system can be slow to respond to newly emerging industries or to new clusters of more established industries.

A more flexible and responsive system is needed to support inward investment and skill development within regions, particularly where new employment opportunities are needed to replace declining industries or businesses.

Faster cycles are needed for updating qualifications while still ensuring their validity and integrity.

A unitised approach which allows mix and match within an overarching framework is required. It is the components of qualifications that should be categorised, not the qualifications themselves. It is simply not feasible nor useful to classify all legitimate qualifications into three types without limiting diversity. (Note: Within the National Qualifications Framework, qualifications have been ascribed to categories. The descriptions and classifications of these have changed over the years, but have included terms such as academic, vocational and general.)

(Hughes and Mager 2000)

Developing more vocationally-oriented qualifications

The experience of Centres of Vocational Excellence may signal the need to review the range of vocational qualifications on offer. The development of GNVQs and now vocational A-levels has shifted the emphasis in college provision from courses and qualifications to develop occupationally specific and vocational skills and knowledge to more general, pre-vocational learning. There are few options for young people wishing to study full-time for vocational qualifications. Work-based alternatives may also be limited because opportunities to become Modern Apprentices depend on the local employment base. As a result, colleges have responded to demand by offering programmes leading to NVQs to people not in employment or have reverted to vocational qualifications outside the NVQ and GNVQ frameworks.

(Hughes 2001b)

Qualifications and small firms

It is essential that current views from workplaces, especially small ones, are gathered and acted upon, so that existing standards and related processes are adapted to conditions in SMEs.

(LSDA 2001a)

There is general recognition that without modification and significant support, the NVQ system is not the ideal way of developing competence in SMEs. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and partners are working to improve the value of NVQs and other vocational qualifications. The development of 'Technical Certificates' should make explicit the theoretical aspects of vocational qualifications.

The evaluation process requires investment, as vocational qualifications may appear impenetrable to the non-specialist. For instance, Modern Apprenticeships require apprentices to gain NVQs to Level 3. The NVQ system consists of a range of learning

activities and training standards determined by national training organisations (NTOs, now SSCs), and awarding bodies, that even colleges find daunting. To the small business, with little knowledge of the language of training and education, this mass is even more daunting. Confusion is increased as some standards are inappropriate to small workplaces, while potentially useful standards are missing from the current system.

The workplace assessment process is resource intensive and many small workplaces require a high level of assistance to achieve appropriate conformance to bureaucratic requirements. This process may work well in larger workplaces, that employ or contract training specialists, but many small businesses do not have access to such specialists. The benefits to SMEs resulting from having staff with NVQs may also not be immediately apparent.

(LSDA 2001a)

Approaches to development

Qualifications should be formed from combinations of mandatory and optional units which could, if necessary, vary in type and level within the same qualifications. Some optional units could be locally designed to cater for specific needs and possibilities.

(Smeaton, Hughes and Hall 2002)

Unitisation of vocational qualifications

Further rationalisation of qualifications could be assisted by a unit-based approach. FEDA's consultation with the FE sector as part of the QCA's work, *Improving the value of NVQs*, sought to address the inadequacy of the underpinning knowledge and skills development within some NVQs. Expert practitioners suggested that the qualifications framework should include a nationally available bank of units, derived from existing qualifications. Depending on the context, these units could be:

- core units - related to occupational areas, rather than generic areas, to ensure that the core does not become too big
- optional additional units – which could be employer-specific units and named as such
- key skills included in the core.

Units should encompass the range of competences required in specific tasks. Their nature, ie whether they are core, optional or additional, could depend on the prerequisite knowledge, skills and understanding of the learning context. The rules of combination of mandatory and optional units could be determined by the appropriate NTO (now SSC) against overall criteria determined by the QCA. These bodies could also determine what constitutes a *full* qualification and what could be needed for career change or progression. This approach is similar to the concept of 'occupational route maps' proposed in the consultation paper.
Some degree of flexibility in determining the core for specialist areas could be obtained if it was derived from a bank of core units. This would allow specialisms to be developed

and assessed. Packages with rules of combination from the unit bank could be developed. These could also be augmented, if continuing professional development (CPD) requirements warranted it, beyond the MA, so that updating could be simpler.

(Hughes 2000a)

Qualifications and small firms

Debate over fundamental issues relating to learning in SMEs is required, including:

- changing the national focus away from assessment and towards learning, by concentrating on learning outcomes, ie what a learner should be able to do, on completion of a learning programme

- re-examination of appropriate assessment criteria and flexible assessment options so students may elect to check for themselves that they are ready to progress. Alternatively, they may prefer formal assessment by an external assessor, on completion of parts or whole courses, perhaps leading to recognised awards based on units of NVQs

- unitisation of qualifications and appropriate relationships between part and full qualifications, with the amounts of learning that can be counted as a unit and the overall qualification. This may enable routine use of some units within many courses. The sizes of the smallest parts of qualifications, and of whole courses which will be publicly funded, also needs to be determined.

(LSDA 2001a)

G: teaching and learning issues

Overview

LSDA has conducted a range of research on teaching and learning issues for vocational education and training. Key themes include the view that the development of new skills will challenge conventional approaches to learning and assessment and may be more appropriately delivered and assessed in more practical and work-based contexts, requiring new methods of teaching and learning.

LSDA has published research on a range of topics, including the value and benefits of realistic work environments, on learning lessons for improving teaching and learning from preparation for international skills competitions and on the full-time education and training option of the New Deal as well as policy advice position papers and a number of national consultation responses which develop LSDA's views on improving vocational teaching and learning.

Other relevant material is reviewed in: topic E on the content of programmes; topic F on qualifications and assessment; topic H on the delivery of learning; and topic I on quality improvement.

Key documents

Strategic reviews and policy advice

18, 40

Research reports

1, 12, 21, 35, 36, 29, 38, 39

Developmental advice, practices and strategies

30, 31, 37

Key messages

- The concept of training as opposed to education deserves fresh attention. It has become too narrowly defined through the introduction of competence-based models of skills acquisition. There is a need to develop a theoretical base from which to improve the pedagogy of work-based learning.
- Colleges should capitalise on the opportunities for the development and practice of skills in a realistic but controlled environment, rather than apologising for the lack of real workplace assessment. There is a role for both on- and off-the-job learning through NVQs and other vocational qualifications.

- The development of some of these new skills will challenge conventional approaches to learning and assessment.
- One way forward [with developing the concept of training] would be to develop what might be termed a pedagogy of work in which research about how people learn in the academic and vocational spheres can be harnessed.
- Teaching and learning delivery methods may need to be adapted for small firms.
- Explicit partnership arrangements between schools, colleges, training providers and industry would improve practices and strategies for delivering vocational education and training.

Issues

Challenges and issues to be addressed

The concept of training as opposed to education deserves fresh attention. It has become too narrowly defined through the introduction of competence-based models of skills acquisition.

(Huddleston and Unwin in Stanton and Richardson 1997)

Better work-based learning

The Common Inspection Framework (CIF) of OFSTED and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) emphasises the benefit to the individual learners as the principal criterion for judgements on the quality of provision. Modern Apprenticeship frameworks require greater theoretical understanding and the development and assessment of key skills. These developments have switched the emphasis from the assessment of competence in a work role to the development and application of knowledge and skills in a work context. The inspection process is therefore looking for a wider range of learning activities and observable learning in the workplace. Providers need more support to come to terms with these developments and to adapt their methods of teaching, learning and assessment accordingly.

(Hughes 2002)

The workplace provides an environment to develop many different types of skill and knowledge. In many small businesses, employers and employees are learning from their everyday experiences, perhaps in informal ways. Providers of support for small businesses should perhaps concentrate on the development of capacity to learn informally in the workplace, and the relationship between this informal learning and more formal learning.

(Hughes *et al* 2002)

Colleges should capitalise on the opportunities for the development and practice of skills in a realistic but controlled environment, rather than apologising for the lack of real workplace assessment. There is a role for both on- and off-the-job learning through NVQs and other vocational qualifications.

(Armstrong and Hughes 2000)

The development of some of these new skills will challenge conventional approaches to learning and assessment. Many are more appropriately delivered and assessed in more practical and work-based contexts and will require new methods of teaching and learning.

(Hughes and Mager 2000)

Approaches to development

Need for a 'pedagogy of work-based learning'

One way forward [with developing the concept of training] would be to develop what might be termed a pedagogy of work in which research about how people learn in the academic and vocational spheres can be harnessed.

(Huddleston and Unwin in Stanton and Richardson 1997)

Improving vocational teaching and learning strategies

Teaching strategies to develop the vocational context require careful planning and often a revision of traditional teaching styles. They need to focus on active learning, where students are involved in activities such as investigating, discussing, planning and presenting.

Examples of such teaching strategies include:

- use of business-based materials
- use of case studies, role play and discussion groups
- analysis of industry data
- presentations from employers
- focused visits to industry
- work experience placements and work shadowing.

(Moore 2001)

During project visits to identify ways of encouraging recruitment to technician-level engineering, managers and young people largely agreed on the features that made for the best engineering training, including:

- a high proportion of hands-on learning
- the quality of the instructors/teachers
- schemes which strove for higher than minimum standards.

Those involved with work-based training particularly valued:

- the opportunity to learn and gain qualifications while earning
- the disciplined, adult atmosphere of the training environments.

(Shirley and Weiss 2001)

The role of realistic work environments in vocational learning and training

Realistic work environments play an important role in providing learning that needs a work context but is better developed initially in a realistic work environment than in a real workplace. Additional benefits include experiencing the transition between education and working life, such as the unsociable aspects of work.

But issues about the appropriateness of NVQ outcomes derived from a realistic work environment setting need to be addressed. There appears to be increasing recognition that there is a role for both NVQs and vocational qualifications that develop knowledge and skills in a more controlled setting.

Colleges should capitalise on the opportunities for the development and practice of skills in a realistic but controlled environment, rather than apologising for the lack of real workplace assessment.

The lack of an acknowledged role for realistic work environments has contributed to the absence of new ones being developed. This should be considered by the local Learning and Skills Councils, as RVQ-type qualifications (also known as technical certificates) may require a more controlled, practical learning environment in which to develop vocational skills.

(Armstrong and Hughes 2000)

Adaptation of teaching and learning methods for SMEs

Teaching and learning delivery methods may need to be adapted for small firms. The LSDA/ADAPT survey report indicates that many colleges working with small firms have drawn on their strengths and have adapted traditional cultures to provide successful new ways for people in SMEs to access learning. These changes involved major investments in staff retraining, in implementation of ICT mechanisms and in developing appropriate training and development courses. This development is not insignificant, whether in the development of new courses or in the 'repackaging' of existing ones.

(LSDA 2000)

Practices and strategies for delivering vocational training

The project conducted by Shirley and Weiss found that a number of principles underlay the good practice examined in the project, including:

- ongoing explicit partnership arrangements between schools, colleges, training providers and the industry
- partnership arrangements which are based on the design and practice of progression patterns beneficial to individuals and which meet the needs of industry

- provision and updating of information among partners, particularly the stimulation of interest in schools about the opportunities afforded by careers in engineering
- organised and well-resourced opportunities for vocational teachers to be kept up to date about current industrial practice
- high-quality learning experiences based on skilled and devoted staff in well-resourced environments
- the extension of opportunities to groups of learners not traditionally associated with engineering, and the identification and removal of barriers to their participation.

(Shirley and Weiss 2001)

The report by Smeaton *et al* on the UK Skills project provides details of strategies to help students work with professionals.

(Smeaton, Hughes and Hall 2002)

H: delivery of vocational skills

Overview

It is important to find ways of delivering learning which will suit and be attractive to different groups of learners. For example, LSDA research concludes that those on Modern Apprenticeship programmes might not be attracted to predominantly classroom-based learning; and learning might be taken to employees in small firms, rather than expecting employees to travel to the provider. Practices that confer vocational authenticity are important not just to establish the credibility of the programmes, but to ensure its effectiveness.

LSDA has published both strategic policy advice and practical guidance on this topic.

Other relevant material is reviewed in: topic E on the content of programmes; topic F on assessment and qualifications; topic G on teaching and learning issues; and topic I on quality improvement.

Key documents

Strategic reviews and policy advice

7, 11, 18

Developmental advice, practices and strategies

22, 23, 24, 29

Key messages

- There is a need to build the capacity of work-based providers and to develop new ways of delivering learning in the workplace.
- The current provider infrastructure also may not be adequate to deliver off-the-job training in the range of occupational areas required.
- If off-the-job learning is delivered through classroom-based learning, unrelated to workplace experience, there is a danger that some young people will find the Modern Apprenticeship option less attractive.
- Features that confer 'vocational authenticity' to the work and often contribute to maintaining enthusiasm for it and commitment to learning are widely recognised.
- Personal contact is a vital component of promoting learning in small firms. Colleges need to consider how to resource this.
- Ways of reducing the costs of training for small firms need to be found.

- Where possible, training needs to be taken out to small firms rather than be based in colleges.

Issues

Role of providers in delivering vocational training

LSDA research suggests that there is a lack of quality in government-supported work-based learning. There is a need to build the capacity of work-based providers and to develop new ways of delivering learning in the workplace.

(Hughes 2002a)

The current provider infrastructure also may not be adequate to deliver off-the-job training in the range of occupational areas required. LSDA suggests that an audit be carried out of the adequacy of provider capacity. Over recent years, with the development of work-based assessment of NVQs, many providers have reduced their vocational training provision. The setting up of local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) with a clear responsibility for, and detailed knowledge of, the provider base in their area may provide a vital mechanism for assessing capacity.

(Hughes 2000a)

The role of ICT in supporting delivery in the workplace is potentially enormous. Learning provision needs to be brought into communities and workplaces for disadvantaged and low-paid workers.

(Hughes and Mager 2000)

Work-based learning for young people

Many young people who opt to follow the work-based route often do so to leave behind classroom-based learning in favour of a more practical approach. If off-the-job learning is delivered through classroom-based learning, unrelated to workplace experience, there is a danger that these young people will find the Modern Apprenticeship option less attractive.

Approaches to work-based learning for young people must be developed which remain motivating and engaging to these learners and which sustain the work-based apprenticeship route as a distinctive option.

(Hughes 2000a)

Adaptation of delivery methods for small firms

Regular contacts and visits by college staff to employers' premises remain essential, even though much training and development can be delivered effectively by distance learning and through outreach centres, and supervised by a course tutor. It is also critical to have tutor support available to assist students by telephone or e-mail on an *ad-hoc* basis. The skills required to provide such interactive support are new.

It is also important to allow a large amount of time and energy for the selection of ICT facilities and computerised learning systems, as these form the backbone that supports everything else.

(LSDA 2000)

Approaches to development

Useful practice for delivering vocational learning to young people

Features that confer 'vocational authenticity' to the work and often contribute to maintaining enthusiasm for it and commitment to learning are widely recognised. Specialist provision should be capitalised upon. For example, pupils based in school might undertake work at an FE college, a training organisation or a specialist centre supported by a sector of industry.

Pupils might take regular or extended work experience or training that matches the vocational course they are pursuing. For instance, pupils following an NVQ programme are likely to gain by assessment, feedback and verification of achievement during their work experience. The learning gained from work experience/ training is capitalised on at school. For example, pupils who have this experience might discuss in lessons how general subjects have relevance to vocational and work-related learning.

The expertise of adults in enterprise and industry can be an invaluable asset to vocational learning. It has been long established that 'well-planned, focused visits ... (lead to) ... gains in ... motivation and understanding' (*Part One GNVQ pilot: interim report*, Ofsted 1996). Visiting experts, projects and challenges, industry days and careers conferences, interest groups and clubs supported by an employer or group of employers are some of the many approaches to capitalising on the relationship.

Inspection evidence shows that many young people gain from well-planned vocational courses and work-related learning. There are sometimes difficulties, too: courses that lack the structure, goals, incentives and transfer value for learners when they move from one phase of education or pathway into another. It is important that breadth and balance be maintained in their curriculum so that choice at transition is not jeopardised and that skills relevant to their next stage are developed.

(Increased Flexibility Support Programme Newsletter 2001)

Useful practice for delivering learning and training to small businesses

Personal contact is a vital component of promoting learning in small firms. Colleges need to consider how to resource this. The diversity of small firms adds to this resourcing issue, particularly in remote rural areas. Staffing requirements for working with small firms will include a wide range of professionals, not just teachers and lecturers.

Providing support and training for small firms is not a lucrative source of income for colleges. Ways of reducing the costs of training for small firms need to be found. Linking small firms with larger companies to share education and training resources might work.

Small firms purchasing training and assistance jointly from colleges on a 'cluster basis' may reduce their purchasing and associated costs, while the colleges may be able to reduce their pre-sales resource by dealing with a cluster of collaborating small firms. Clustering can also enable those within it to have market and economic information collated and shared jointly, to the mutual benefit of all concerned. This may also enable the cluster to share such information with those with regional influence and at national and government levels, perhaps in conjunction with the forthcoming national Small Business Service.

(LSDA 2000)

Where possible, training needs to be taken out to small firms rather than be based in colleges. The importance of networking and informal learning needs to be emphasised.

Particularly, but not exclusively, in relation to small firms – learning through work is less well-formed than learning at work. New learning models are required where learning through the job brings about increased capacity. This would require an active learning culture and innovative ways of securing learning.

(Hughes 2000b, page 7)

I: quality improvement

Overview

A recurring theme in LSDA's work on quality improvement in vocational education and training is that regular and systematic updating of the pedagogic and specialist skills of teachers and trainers is required to ensure that they are able to deliver effectively the knowledge and skills needed to support economic competitiveness.

LSDA has conducted a range of research into quality improvement in the work-based sector and centres of vocational excellence as a means of helping learning providers gear up for a new post-16 sector and the challenges posed by a number of high-profile policy initiatives, such as Centres of Vocational Excellence. LSDA has also published research and good practice into how best to develop leading-edge staff; into creating effective staff secondments to business and industry; and into developing skills for responsiveness to employer needs and economic development.

Further relevant information may be found in: topics G on teaching and learning issues; topic H on delivery of learning and topic J on developing provider/employer partnerships.

Key documents

Strategic reviews and policy advice

10, 18

Research reports

2, 8,19, 6, 12, 35, 29

Developmental advice, practices and strategies

27

Key messages

- Regular and systematic updating of the pedagogic and specialist skills of teachers and trainers is required to ensure that they are able to deliver effectively the knowledge and skills needed to support economic competitiveness.
- There has been little sustained and systematic development of staff in the work-based sector.
- The range of programmes available for young people may not be meeting the needs of all learners in work-based learning.
- Colleges that have succeeded in forging relationships with local firms have been those that have invested in extensive staff development programmes.

- Individual staff in FE colleges keep themselves up to date in a variety of ways but there is no coherent approach to updating vocational staff across the sector.

Issues

The need for updated skills for vocational training

There is a low proportion of staff with relevant qualifications in the work-based sector. There has been little sustained and systematic development of staff. Demands for more rigorous learning and assessment in the work-based route need to be accompanied by support and development of the people charged with its delivery. The work-based sector needs to be supported to take a strategic view of its own development through better self-assessment and quality improvement.

The range of programmes available for young people may not be meeting the needs of all learners in work-based learning. As a result, learners may be placed on inappropriate programmes, which they subsequently leave without completing. There are important related issues of good careers guidance and accurate initial assessment followed by the delivery of effective learner support.

(Hughes 2002b)

Regular and systematic updating of the pedagogic and specialist skills of teachers and trainers is required to ensure that they are able to deliver effectively the knowledge and skills needed to support economic competitiveness.

(Hughes and Mager 2000)

Vocational education and training staff should be up to date in skills and knowledge to the level at which they are teaching. There should be minimum standards for this, preferably endorsed by FENTO, which providers should have to meet as a condition of funding. Opportunities for sharing staff training and updating with employers should be considered. Organisations such as LSDA, the Learning and Skills Council, National Training Organisations (NTOs, now SSCs), awarding bodies and the DfEE need to offer guidance and support. Appropriate structures and, possibly, a central fund for staff updating and product development are needed to secure systematic updating across the sector.

(Brookes and Hughes 2001)

The delivery of high-quality specialist vocational provision

In *Searching for excellence in FE colleges*, LSDA reported upon research undertaken into how far FE colleges provide state-of-the-art vocational education and training. It found that the successful delivery of such provision depended upon having:

- a focused mission and strategy
- first-rate teaching by expert staff
- relevant and coherent content
- sustained relationships with employers

- appropriate equipment and accommodation

(Hughes and Smeaton 2001)

The need to improve vocational teaching and learning

There is a need for new and more challenging standards as the importance of work-based learning grows. In particular, there needs to be demonstrable impact on:

- the development of individuals
- the business success of employers
- the country's skill base.

(Hughes 2000b)

While pastoral support for individual trainees is reported to be often good, it requires further development in other areas of trainee support. Significant issues that have emerged include:

- poor image of work-based training and its impact on recruitment – messages from teachers, employers and careers advisers should reinforce the legitimacy of the work-based route to qualifications and success
- poor initial assessment and action planning – individualised approaches are required that interpret the results of customised screening and diagnostic tests, and provide guidance on effective learning opportunities
- retention and successful completion – anecdotal evidence suggests that retention and successful completion is as problematic in the work-based route as in other post-16 provision
- supporting training in the workplace – the success of work-based training is crucially dependent on encouraging ownership by employers, line managers/supervisors; peers; mentors
- encouraging exchange of practice – the practice of preparing self-assessment reports could be built upon and benchmarking encouraged
- support activity to extend current practice – the LSC provides the opportunity to develop a more comprehensive approach to quality improvement, which could build on current arrangements
- models for learning at and through work – most learning appears to be undertaken in traditional off-the-job modes.

(Hughes 2002b)

The value of staff development programmes in developing employer links

Colleges that have succeeded in forging relationships with local firms have been those that have invested in extensive staff development programmes. They have done so to

familiarise their academic staff with ICT basic principles and hardware. This is essential to enable ICT to be embedded into the curriculum, and to enable colleges to create an infrastructure to increase the delivery of online and distance learning. Some colleges consider that they will need to maintain physical outreach centres and mobile training facilities until typical students become more confident of ICT and perhaps less shy of colleges.

(LSDA 2000)

Despite strong support for teacher placement from managers, many schools and colleges have reported problems with finding time to release staff to undertake them, for example finding and paying for cover. These problems are often associated with the more traditional pattern of teacher placement, which involves teachers spending one or two weeks with a particular employer. While there is a great deal to commend this form of placement, there are manageability, resource and education-based arguments for looking at other forms of delivery.

(Moore 2001)

Developing cutting-edge vocational skills

Individual staff in FE colleges keep themselves up to date in a variety of ways but there is no coherent approach to updating vocational staff across the sector. The stock of teachers with significant and recent work experience in their vocational area is diminishing. Many FE staff have not been employed directly in their industry for 5–15 years. Securing work experience for these staff is a priority.

(Brookes and Hughes 2001)

Staff clearly see the value of a period back in industry but have little opportunity to experience it. Some feel that teaching a vocational skill enables them to keep up to date, whereas others stress the need to return to a 'real' work environment.

Much of their updating is done outside timetabled hours, at weekends and during holidays. Time should be allocated to updating skills and knowledge in an appropriate setting.

(Brookes and Hughes 2001)

Approaches to development

Developing partnership and economic development skills

There needs to develop economic development and partnership competence for FE staff and management.

FE staff undertake more continuing professional development than staff in any other sector. Economic development and partnerships issues however take place behind more pressing concerns such as curriculum issues. Many staff in a survey said that if a qualification framework for these subjects existed, they would take it up.

There seems to be a parallel willingness among those responsible for staff development to support the costs of such development.

The publication includes a learning needs analysis tool – it is aimed at staff engaged in local economic development activities in relation to strategy and project development in a partnership setting where colleges collaborate with others.

(Johnston and James 2000)

FE staff secondments to business and industry

Well-planned and appropriate secondments and placements are powerful learning experiences that result in a wide range of benefits, to staff concerned, to students and to the host organisation. Placements provide effective staff updates with immediate benefits.

Advancements in working practices and the vast range of vocational contexts contained in the FE curriculum mean that recent and relevant experience in business and industry is increasingly important for college staff. But access to industrial placements is far from universal across the FE sector.

Secondments can serve many purposes including improving college staff knowledge of industrial customers; improving general awareness of industry management practice; developing employer awareness of further education provision; building specific awareness of up-to-date techniques and skill requirements; developing and checking out student work placements.

Industrial placements work best within a whole-college staff development policy. Even when well-organised and well-funded placements and secondments rely on individual good will and motivation for their success. Some FE colleges have tried to recognise this by offering accreditation to the individuals taking part.

The LSDA project provides a good practice guide and checklist.

(Hughes 1998)

Incentives and rewards for high-quality staff

A range of incentives and rewards are needed to attract staff from industry. These may include:

- financial rewards that are comparable to remuneration in their vocational sector
- a range of resources to support their initial teaching experience
- involvement in the planning and updating of the vocational content of courses
- the opportunity to pair more experienced teachers with new recruits from industry to allow cross-fertilisation of experience and expertise.

Shared staffing with employers or the endorsement of industry may also be attractive. Employer partners could offer their staff the chance to work part-time in further education.

New methods of working allowing some flexibility in working conditions are needed, including:

- industrial updating through placement and cooperative working arrangements with large and small enterprises
- the opportunity to offer consultancy services to industry
- a role in the updating of current vocational staff
- timetables which include dedicated time to undertake regular research and development with up-to-date teaching schemes, activities and materials.

(Hughes 2001b)

J: partnerships – the college/employer interface

Overview

A key conclusion of LSDA's research and advice on working with employers on skills matters is that getting them involved can be challenging, but it is worthwhile because of the wide range of benefits that can accrue from provider/employer relationships. To support employers effectively, learning providers need to be involved in a wide range of activities including relationship marketing, awareness raising, providing information and general involvement in the everyday life of the business community.

A number of LSDA research projects have investigated aspects of the provider/employer relationship including how to develop responsiveness in vocational education and training; ways of working with industry. LSDA has also published guidance on practices and strategies that can improve and develop provider links with employers.

Further relevant material can be found in: topic C on meeting employer needs and topic D on meeting the needs of individuals.

Key documents

Strategic reviews and policy advice

42

Research reports

17, 13, 5, 35, 29, 39

Developmental advice, practices and strategies

31, 41

Key messages

- Getting employers involved is challenging.
- Employers will want to be convinced not only that they have the capacity to provide appropriate learning support to learners, but also that there are sound commercial arguments for investing time in learning activities.
- Training providers can face a variety of problems, from a lack of commitment to learning on the part of some employers, to concerns about the difficulties, for both tutors and workplace supervisors, of coping with learners who may need substantial support
- These difficulties may be more pronounced when training providers are attempting to find work-based learning opportunities for 'harder to help' learners.

- Providers need to be involved in many other support activities to engage employers in learning. These include relationship marketing, awareness raising, providing information and general involvement in the everyday life of the business community.

- There is a need for more specialist support, such as specific identification of training needs, research and technical support to develop new products or new working practices.

- Brokers can play a key role. Employers are more likely to be receptive to brokers who can promote the goals of higher profit and business success through a range of services and facilities with learning as a key component.

- Strategic alliances between employers and education training providers can add more value to the learning opportunities provided than is likely to result from a more traditional producer/supplier relationship.

- Key characteristics of responsiveness to employer and learner needs might include: the capacity to identify skills gaps and assess individual needs; a clear articulation of needs in a common language; expert staff able to work flexibly without detriment to regular provision and the capacity to customise training packages.

Issues

Getting employers involved

Getting employers involved is challenging. Training providers can face a variety of problems, from a lack of commitment to learning on the part of some employers, to concerns about the difficulties, for both tutors and workplace supervisors, of coping with learners who may need substantial support.

These difficulties may be more pronounced when training providers are attempting to find work-based learning opportunities for 'harder to help' learners such as ex-offenders, people with disabilities and/or learning difficulties, young people who have left school without qualifications, and people from socially excluded groups. Employers may perceive a number of barriers to getting involved, including:

- lack of time to get involved in planning and reviewing on-the-job learning

- uncertainties about who takes responsibility for supporting learners

- perceived distinctions between on- and off-the-job learning, viewing the former as their role and the latter as that of the training provider

- the technical language of learning, assessment and qualifications may be off-putting

- tight budgets for all aspects of learning may limit the time and resources available

- time spent on education and qualifications may not be seen as commercially rewarding

- the demands of learners may be thought to conflict with those of other workers
- employers may be deterred by the background history of some learners (such as ex-offenders, drug users, those who have a poor record of work attendance or have been dismissed by another employer).

Developing relationships between college and employers

A joint FEDA BAe systems project researched the development of best practice partnerships between education and training providers and employers, drawing on models from business and industry.

Key findings included:

- strategic alliances between employers and education training providers can add more value to the learning opportunities provided than is likely to result from a more traditional producer/supplier relationship
- it is equally valid to assess the costs and benefits of partnerships concerned with the development of skills as it is to evaluate those concerned with the exchange of any other service. Models drawn from business theory could provide a useful starting point when determining the business case for partnerships between education and industry
- there is frequently a lack of clarity in defining the needs and consequently there is an inexact match with learning opportunities that increase employee effectiveness. Better mutual understanding could be beneficial
- strategic alliances can help with predicting long-term skill and knowledge requirements, thereby shifting the emphasis from remedying deficits to predicting and planning for the future.

(Hughes and Cottam 2000)

Developing responsiveness

Although labour market information has been used in a limited way in the past, providers are conscious of the need to increase its use. Private training organisations feel that they are missing out as they do not know how to obtain or use it. Colleges confirm that skills forecasts are used to check that provision synchronises with labour market needs, but skills forecasts are insufficiently detailed to be of much use.

Although the identification of demands on the workforce is important, using this information within a system geared to adapting provision and developing new learning programmes is equally vital.

(Hughes and McPherson 2001)

A responsive system requires:

- regular and frequent information from employers about their skills gaps and shortages

- skilled, competent workforces able to learn things quickly
- quality assurance and funding systems which enable training responses to be assembled quickly
- a unitised qualifications framework
- changes to employer attitudes about training.

Forward planning can only go so far to prepare for unexpected need. A nimble and responsive system is needed which can rapidly customise provision to meet emerging needs.

Key ingredients of such a system would be:

- capacity to identify skills gaps and assess individual needs
- clear articulation of needs in a common language
- expert teaching staff able to work flexibly without detriment to regular provision
- the capacity to customise training packages
- sensitive funding regimes which enable employers, individuals and the local economy to up-skill rapidly

The publication provides examples of colleges responses and checklist for colleges wishing to use labour market information.

(Hughes 1997)

The project includes 17 case studies demonstrating different ways in which colleges have improved their responsiveness to employers, including working to tailor training facilities, training courses, flexible delivery methods, small firm development.

The project raises a number of key points for colleges:

- managing the interface – senior staff must be committed to working with industry and having a strategy for driving it forward. Supportive and empowering management is essential. Flexibility within the strategic plan is also essential for coping with unpredicted demand. Major projects must be managed at a senior level within the college – they will need management time and a high level of commitment from college staff
- partnerships – colleges should establish clear guideline and objectives for partnerships and develop the appropriate management. If there are real long-term opportunities, consider setting up a charity organisation
- flexibility and responsiveness – colleges should anticipate change and be proactive not reactive. Alternative modes of delivery for traditional courses should be explored. The ability to respond quickly is essential. Flexibility of the most important factor in

securing the participation of small firms. A choice of delivery methods together with the option of change if circumstances require, may enable many candidates to complete the programme despite pressures of being a manager in a small firm

- staffing – intensive staff development may be needed to facilitate quality delivery. Staff involved in marketing to industry must be familiar with the full range of college services. Full use should be made of labour market intelligence and surveys of local industrial sectors. Every opportunity should be taken to pursue individual contacts

- curriculum development – integrating current external requirements into the curriculum will ensure that students are aware of and equipped for the commercial marketplace.

(Hughes 1997)

Approaches to development

Developing the relationship

Providers need to be involved in many other support activities to engage employers in learning. These include relationship marketing, awareness raising, providing information and general involvement in the everyday life of the business community. There is a need for more specialist support, such as specific identification of training needs, research and technical support to develop new products or new working practices. There needs to be access to a core of funding that will support the development of this service.

Brokers can play a key role. Employers are more likely to be receptive to brokers who can promote the goals of higher profit and business success through a range of service sand facilities with learning as a key component.

(Taylor and Cameron 2001)

Links with businesses should benefit students, teachers and the businesses themselves. It is important to remember that businesses have to manage their day-to-day operations, so cannot always respond as quickly as you may want them to. In contacting businesses planning is crucial. Think about what you actually want out of your contact with industry, perhaps writing it down in the form of a brief. Target specific organisations and consider how an education/business link might benefit them, too.

Key points for setting up and maintaining education/business links:

- make use of existing links
- identify key sources and organisations to provide addresses and phone numbers
- avoid inundating the same business with too many requests
- be clear about exactly what you need from the business
- don't expect too much too soon – businesses have a business to run
- try to think of some mutual benefit that could be provided by the link.

(Moore 2001)

The LSDA/UKSKILLS project also provides details of strategies to provide better links with employers.

(Smeaton, Hughes and Hall 2002)

Getting employers involved

Employers can provide a number of benefits or services to schools or colleges to help them make their courses more work-related:

- curriculum advice – where employers will offer practical support or advice on the delivery of courses, their content and the latest industrial or commercial advances, often through joining a subject or departmental advisory group
- curriculum materials – these are sometimes sponsored or produced by a company or consortium of industrial organisations, with the aim of advising or attracting potential entrants to industry
- mentoring – an adult with industrial or commercial experience gives one-to-one support to a student or trainee who is looking to enter the employment market
- mock interviews – simulated interviews conducted by people who interview candidates as part of their actual job roles
- talks or lectures – an employer may visit the classroom and provide a 'reality check' on vocational theory and student perceptions
- work-based projects – where one or more students may undertake a problem-solving or analytical task on the company's premises
- work experience – a full engagement in the workplace, which has become a staple element of work-related education
- work shadowing – allows students to observe the working environment, undertake tasks and talk to staff
- workplace visits – structured visits to companies can help understanding, but require a deal of planning on the part of the firm involved.

(Moore 2001)

Challenges of getting employers involved can be overcome and perceptions changed. LSDA case studies show that a key success factor developing a whole organisation approach to meeting the needs of employers, for example by:

- making it the job of every trainer (not just the placement officer) to help build relationships with employers seeking openings to develop new work-based learning opportunities
- seeing working relationships between individuals as being absolutely critical.

Employers will want to be convinced, not only that they have the capacity to provide appropriate learning support to learners, but also that there are sound commercial arguments for investing time in learning activities. When seeking to collaborate with employers, trainers need to be able to explain clearly what will be required, what the cost implications may be and what support employers can expect in return from the training provider.

Employers can be involved with work-based learning in a variety of ways and care should be exercised in selecting the most appropriate in each case.

Managing the interface between on- and off-the-job experience is crucial. The training provider (whether a company in-house trainer, a college, or a private or voluntary sector provider of training) needs to mediate between the employer and learner, as well as handle the often complex administration and quality assurance of schemes.

(Taylor 2001)

The above publication includes examples of good practice for getting employers involved:

- resources to do the job
- preparing for learning at work
- supporting effective learning in the workplace
- supporting learners' personal development.

Whole-college approach to developing the relationship with employers

Colleges need to plan for responsiveness and take advantage of all opportunities to foster relationships and partnerships with their business community. Responsiveness to the needs of industry has implications for initial training, continuing professional development, the development of higher level skills and for newly returned entrants to the labour market. A regular audit of the interface between the college and its local, regional, national and international business community is therefore an important part of the strategic planning process.

(Hughes 1997)

Developing responsive provision

Colleges working with industry provides an audit instrument which colleges can use to assess the extent to which they are responsive to industry needs.

(Hughes 1997)

Creating relationships with small businesses

Targeting is crucial as the needs of these different types of firms are different. Many colleges had partnership activities resulting in some tangible 'end products', for instance, funding for a computing centre or helpdesk service for small firms. These activities could enable initial funding to reap long-term benefits for the FE colleges and their

neighbourhoods. Other partnerships prepared their students for the future by arranging work experience placements in local smaller firms

Development of ongoing relationships is a lengthy process, which can be retarded by overt pressure to sell services or by a lack of the realisation that representatives in smaller and larger organisations may have to be approached in very different ways.

(LSDA 2000)

Working with micro-businesses

Advice on this suggests the need to:

- list, categorise and analyse the college's existing partnerships with micro-businesses
- review policies to instigate more effective ways of keeping in contact with local employers
- raise these resource issues with the appropriate bodies to ensure they are aware of the college's contribution and the resources required to sustain partnerships
- check how the college keeps up to date with local employers' views
- check what steps the college has taken to coordinate its approaches to local firms
- check that services to a local, smaller workplace have really benefited it
- check how the college keeps up to date with statutory requirements on issues that are common to many local workplaces (eg health and safety, employment, data protection, human rights, disability-related issues and so on) so that it can develop effective services in these areas

Colleges should:

- develop a range of services, apart from training, connected with business development; for example, advice in cash flow, employment practice, recruitment
- consider ways of pricing provision for small firms which take account of available subsidies, but require some contribution from the employer, or employee. Ensure that pricing policies are transparent and consistent.

(LSDA 2001b)

K: the role of other organisations

Overview

The involvement and contribution of a range of other organisations are important to achieving success in skills development. Research reports and position papers by LSDA have drawn attention to the need to involve NTOs (now SSCs), trade unions, learning brokers, advice and guidance organisations and so on, and have suggested the contributions that each party might make.

Further relevant information may be found in: topic A on the contribution of learning providers to economic development; and topic B on developing the strategic policy framework.

Key documents

Strategic reviews and policy advice

9

Research reports

43, 42

Key messages

Trade unions

Trades unions can be influential in promoting confidence and changing cultural attitudes by encouraging peer support for learning in the workplace; giving credibility to work-based learning initiatives; reaching out to non-traditional learners in partnership with providers; using lobbying and brokerage powers to demand learning; taking steps to enrich work content; working with employers to set and upgrade skills standards; monitoring the quality of training provided in the workplace – for example, workplace partnerships, as supported by Unison.

(Taylor and Cameron 2001)

National Training Organisations and Sector Skills Councils

LSDA welcomes the emphasis given to partnership working and the need for NTOs (now SSCs) to establish effective working relationships that earn them authority. LSDA is particularly concerned that NTOs should engage in dialogue with learning providers to constructively advise on ways to improve and extend the learning provision on offer.

(Hughes 2001a)

Approaches to development

Electrotechnical industries

There would appear to be an urgent need for a step-change by partners within the sector so that they take on board the implications, for skills, of future change not only in technology, but also in forms of employment and in patterns of work and careers. This needs to involve a mutual acknowledgement and understanding of:

- what the skill shortages are
- what tools are available to address them.

More research is needed to add to the information which occupational trends give us about skill needs, and major strategies need to be put in place by the industry and all its partners to prevent the image of the sector as being increasingly a deterrent factor to recruitment and take-up of training.

The DfEE/NTOs document on skills dialogues recommends change in several areas that are relevant to the electrotechnical sector, all of which coordinate with findings of this project.

- Solve the recruitment problem and the impending difficulties of 10 years hence, when the lower levels of attainment of current cohorts will militate against their promotion to jobs requiring higher skills and involving supervisory work. However, a sharp increase in college provision is specifically precluded.
- Do a better job of retaining existing workers: win back traditional recruits; attract more people from outside that group – women, members of ethnic minorities, older people, and then invest in their skills.
- Reduce reliance on under-qualified site workers, both by recognising the skills that many site workers already have, and by encouraging workers to gain qualifications through training. The demand for this shift comes partly from the need to retain workers; partly from a need for multi-skilled or cross-craft workers; and partly from customers who want some assurance that they are getting good quality work, and thus care about the qualifications of those who do the work.
- Address quality problems in front-line supervisory and technician posts and enhance project management skills.
- Raise the quality of managers and professionals at entry to employment. This is closely connected with improving the attractiveness of the industry.

(Weiss 2001)

Documents reviewed

1 Armstrong P and Hughes M (2000). *Developing skills: realistic work environments in further education.* [F,G]

2 Brookes D and Hughes M (2001). *Developing leading-edge staff in vocational education and training.* [I]

3 Edwards C (ed) (1998). *Further forward: the local economic development audit and planning toolkit for further education.* [A]

4 Hughes C (2000). *It's the economy stupid! Re-thinking learning and skills.* [B, E]

5 Hughes M (1997). *Colleges working with industry.* FE Matters, Vol 1 Number 3. [J]

6 Hughes M (1998). *Learning with business: FE staff secondments to business and industry.* [I]

7 Hughes M (2000a). *DfEE consultation on Modern Apprenticeships: FEDA response.* [E, H]

8 Hughes M (2000b). *Quality improvement in the work-based sector: summary report.* [I]

9 Hughes M (2001a). *Building a stronger network: developing the role of National Training Organisations.* [K]

10 Hughes M (2001b). *Centres of Vocational Excellence: heralding a new era in further education.* [B, F, I]

11 Hughes,M (2002a). *LSC draft workforce development strategy to 2005: response by LSDA.* [B, C, D, E, F, H]

12 Hughes M (2002b). *Making the grade: a report on standards in work-based learning for young people.* [E, I, G]

13 Hughes M and Cottam S (2000). *Partnerships for skills: investing in training for the 21st century* [J]

14 Hughes M and Gray S (1998). *Promoting learning in small and medium-sized enterprises.* [C]

15 Hughes M and Kingsford M (1997). *A real job – with prospects: supported learning opportunities for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities.* [D]

16 Hughes M and Kypri P (1998). *Beyond responsiveness: promoting good practice in economic development.* [A]

17 Hughes M and MacPherson S (2001). *Developing responsiveness in vocational education and training.* [J]

18 Hughes M and Mager C (2000). *The skills agenda: issues for post-16 providers.* [B, E, G, H, I]

19 Hughes M and Smeaton B (2001). *Searching for excellence in FE colleges.* [I]

20 Hughes M and Stoner F (2000). *Understanding and sustaining employability: conference version.* [B, E]

21 Hughes M, Keddie V, Webb P, Corney M (2002). *Working towards skills.* [B, C, D, G]

22 Increased Flexibility Support Programme Newsletter, November 2001. [H]

23 Increased Flexibility Support Programme. *What do you need? Work-related coordinators support pack*, CD-ROM (2002). [D, H]

24 Industry information packs, CD-ROM, 2002 [D, H]

leisure and recreation
construction
business and retail
art and design
engineering
hospitality and catering
health and social care
travel and tourism
science
media
manufacturing

25 James S (ed) (1998). *FE: aspects of economic development.* [A, B]

26 James S and Clark G (1997). *Investing partners: further education, economic development and regional policy* [A, B]

27 Johnston D and James S (2000). *Competence and competitiveness: colleges and local economic development.* [A, B, I]

28 Kypri P and Clarke G (1997). *Furthering local economies.* [A]

29 LSDA (2000). *How colleges are working with small businesses: survey report.* [C, F, G, H, I, J]

30 LSDA (2001a). *How to work with small businesses.* [C, F, G]

31 LSDA (2001b). *How to work with micro-businesses.* [C, F, G, J]

32 LSDA (2003). *Towards a framework for supporting workforce development.* (DRAFT)

33 Mager C (ed) (2000). *The new learning market.* [B, C, F]

34 Martinez P (2001). *Value added in vocational qualifications.* [F]

35 Moore S (2001). *Get real: work-related education and training.* [E,G, I, J]

36 Payne J (2003). *Basic skills in the workplace: a research review.* [D, G]

37 Ratcliffe M, Atkinson J, Burgess M, Cartner N (2001). *Developing good practice in New Deal in colleges.* [D, G]

38 Shirley T, Weiss, C (2001). *Encouraging higher recruitment to technician engineering training.* [D, G]

39 Smeaton B, Hughes M and Hall G (2002) *From competence to excellence: developing excellence in vocational skills.* [E, F, G, J]

40 Stanton G and Richardson W (1997). *Qualifications for the future: a study of tripartite and other divisions in post-16 education and training.* [B, C, D, E, G]

41 Taylor S (2001). *Getting employers Involved: improving work-based learning through employer links, report and good practice guidelines,* [J]

42 Taylor S and Cameron, H (2001). *Attracting new learners: international evidence and practice.* [B, C, D, E, J, K]

43 Weiss C (2002). *Matching skill needs to training provision in the electrotechnical industry: project final report.* [K]

This publication is part of the LSDA collection *A basis for skills*. Each publication is available separately and the overview is on the LSDA website www.LSDA.org.uk in *Briefing*.

A basis for skills includes:

1 An introduction to the pack

2 Developing the 'college for business' in Sussex
ISBN 1 85338 876 9

3 Further supporting business: research related support for company innovation and development
ISBN 1 85338 875 0

4 Investigating intermediate skills
ISBN 1 85338 878 5

5 Coherence and quality or relevance and flexibility in vocational qualifications?
ISBN 1 85338 879 3

6 Reviewing LSDA support for skills
ISBN 1 85338 877 7

ISBN 1 85338 877 7 (book)
ISBN 1 85338 866 1 (pack)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

NOTICE

Reproduction Basis

X	This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.
	This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").